Examining Online Social Brand Engagement and Customer Loyalty: A Qualitative Study Based on Customer Brand Engagement Theory

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Abstract

One of the most important changes in today's lifestyle is social networking and the usage of social media. Today, most people use social media to talk and learn about most of the things they want to know. This study is significant because brands are adopting new strategies to increase their market exposure and selling power, and the impact of firm-generated content and social presence on brands' social engagement is changing leading towards the brand purchase intention. To demonstrate this, a qualitative survey was conducted and data was collected to in the form of interviews. Using a semi-structured interviews format, the researchers sought to explore some of the factors that increase brands' social engagement online. Increased brand social engagement can be attributed to a company's social presence and the content it creates. This information was collected from 20 key respondents who gave the interview. The results gathered by the researchers showed that people communicating online and expressing great ideas and thoughts about the brand are very helpful for brands to stay connected with customers and subsequently offer better services and products.

Keywords: Social Presence Theory, Social Media, Social Brand Engagement, e-WOM, Firm Generated Content.

1.1 Background

People's attitudes have changed dramatically over the last decades and they now use modern technology in their daily lives. It has been proven that people shop online through various social media platforms, so businesses are incorporating more social media into their strategies to attract more customers. It has also proven to be the easiest way for businesses to connect with customers and raise awareness of their brand. Moreover, the factors that influence customer engagement, decision making and website usage are currently being studied by the marketers. According to (Osei-Frimpong & Mclean, 2017), the firm-generated content (FGC) is a way for companies to communicate with their target audience and build brand and consumer information posted on social media to better understand the brand-consumer relationship. In addition, Twitter, YouTube and Facebook are currently the most popular social networking sites. Because these sites are so popular and loved by everyone, people from sectors such as media, IT and telecommunications, consumer goods and retail have started to collaborate in order to get the finest results. While companies today consider social media to be the most effective strategy for retaining and gaining customer trust, there is a need for in-depth research into why consumers value social media platforms more when it comes to shopping.

Customers are increasingly using online communication channels to share their knowledge and opinions. With that, activities such as following brands on social media, participating in competitions and sharing content can increase brand recognition and the awareness among consumers. The customers are more likely to buy from a brand in the future if they are familiar with the brand and its products. (Jain et al., 2017). Consumers are influencing some changes in the market, as this medium makes it easier for people to share their experiences with brands and leave comments on social media platforms. As a consequence, companies rethink their marketing strategies and now focus on informing customers about the brand in advance and evaluating their post-purchase behavior.

Moreover, to achieve customer satisfaction, they need to know what customers want. Every day, customers encounter a plethora of products, but only a few have won their hearts and minds. CBE which is known as consumer brand engagement is a new strategy to increase customer brand loyalty leading towards the purchase intent of the customers, which is also a competitive advantage for companies in the market. As a result, companies are now experimenting with new strategies to increase customers' interest in their brands and attract and engage them on social media platforms such as Facebook

(Carvalho & Fernandes, 2018). Something can be learned about perceptions, emotions and behavior. In addition, emotional factors refer to the consumer's experience with the product, whether they had a pleasant experience with it, a good or bad impression, etc. Cognitive processes refer to the thought processes after the consumer has bought a certain product. In other words, the behavioral aspect refers to how customers react after buying a product and whether they will buy it again. This mainly depends on how satisfied customers are with the product; according to (Harrigan et al., 2017), companies also pay more attention to maintaining good customer relationships to increase sales. As consumer engagement increases, so does word of mouth, as consumers trust it and it plays an important role in their purchasing decisions. This has a significant impact on human psychology, as customers' opinions change when they hear positive and negative comments about a product. With the advent of social media, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) has developed, which refers to any comments about a product on social media such as Facebook, blogs and product review sites (Chu & Kim, 2011). Brands can engage personally with their customers through social media. Through comments, direct messages and other forms of interaction, brands can build familiarity, trust and an emotional connection with their customers. Such personal interaction results into making customers feel highly regarded and keeps them engaged with the brand.

1.3 Research Objective

RO1: Understanding different social media platforms for brand engagement

RO2: Examining how social media engagement boosts the customer brand loyalty

RO3: Identifying which social media platform is considered most efficient for brand engagement

1.4 Research Questions

RQ.1: How can social media brand engagement enhance customer loyalty toward the brand?

RQ.2: How customer brand engagement will lead towards the buying decision of customers?

RQ.3: How firm generated content play an instrumental role in increased customer engagement?

2.1 Theoretical Review

Customer Brand Engagement Theory

The idea behind customer brand engagement (CBE) is to embolden an organization's customers to communicate with brand and with other customers so that all parties share in the brand experience, leading to brand expansion and customer loyalty. This is a relatively new concept based on existing relationship marketing theory, and (Gambetti, R.C., Graffigna, G. and Biraghi, S., 2012) offer a practitioner's perspective on the key factors of CBE, how these drivers interrelate and this was observed when conducting a grounded theory-based study to identify the stages of development of the CBE process. Along with that, the brand, marketing and the communication professionals accountable for making brand-related decisions were interviewed. Despite their different roles, their perspectives, experiences and the expectations are

of equal significance to this research, as they share a desire to define and achieve the brand effectiveness. It was needed to involve the different views on branding to gain a broader range of findings and a deeper understanding. Liu, R.L et al., 2018) state that consumers tend to choose brands that best represent them. The experts interviewed for this research considered CBE to be "a multi-dimensional concept that combines the elements of attention, communication, sentiments, sensory pleasure and instant activation to create a holistic consumer experience of a brand". The results show that brand adoption is the most important trigger of the customer brand engagement process. Consumers who participate in brand adoption engage with the brand world and "bring the brand to life". As a result, brand becomes the "enabler of customers actions" and becomes firmly embedded in the customer's life ultimately resulting into the buying decision of the customers. Practitioners highlight physical and value proximity, consumer agency and the integration of brand communication as the three most important factors for brand activation: the higher the intensity of customer brand engagement, the higher the level of these three factors, indicating a progressive process of CBE (Hari, H., Iyer, R. & Sampat, B., 2022).

There is a shift from passive consumers responding to advertising responses to continuous increasing active consumers who can create physical and valuable affinity by combining the traditional advertising with the innovative and non-traditional communication methods. Consumers who actively engage with branded content and spread brand values along with stories among their peers through the positive or negative word of mouth/ referral and viral online messages are considered as active consumers. By integrating traditional and non-traditional communications, brands can directly target consumers, especially young consumers, and deliver personalised messages, while ensuring broad reach and awareness (Santos, Z.R et al., 2022). The study concluded that to attract customers to a brand, marketers must enter their customers' lives and more importantly build an authentic and deep relationship with them. Even when marketers recognize CBE and integrate it into the marketing execution, the marketers are still finding it difficult to comprehend the concept. As a result, practitioners are continually experimenting and testing new branding strategies. It is significant to recognise that the conceptual framework presented as a result of this study is only preliminary and further detailed research is needed to corroborate it. However, there is no denying that this study offers an intriguing insight into the fundamentals from the practitioner's perspective (Aljuhmani, H.Y et al., 2022).

Customer Engagement with Brands on Social Media

The concept of customer engagement has received much attention in terms of research and practice: according to (Osei-Frimpong & Mclean, 2017), a lot of authors explained brand engagement as having three dimensions: cognitive, affective and behavioral. Moreover, customer engagement is motivational in nature, as it involves the co-creation of the customer experiences with key brand objectives and core

brand relationships (Hollebeek, L.D., 2011) Customer engagement is the motivational level of the particular customer mindset, symbolized by the multidimensional interactions with the brand; According to (Calder et al., 2009) online engagement is a secondary construct with a number of primary constructs. Experience is defined as the belief that the website is integrated into the consumer's life. Furthermore, consumers are positively influenced by brand communities and are intrinsically motivated to communicate with the members of community. he definition of brand social engagement is considered "the communication and the creation of brand story among two parties, such as consumers on social media using language, meanings along with images associated with the brand (Algesheimer et al., 2005). Brands can use virtual entertainment to provide benefits to their audience, like discounts, early accessibility to number of products and services, and fun encounters. Customers can maintain brand loyalty by continuing to receive these exclusive benefits.

According to (Bowden, J.L.H., 2009). consumers interact emotionally and informally with travel brands on the social media based on their interests. Brand-centric customers tend to associate their feelings, thoughts and affections with their favorite brands and consumers go through the information into their beliefs that lead to changes in attitudes and behavior. According to (Gummerus et al., 2012), perception levels can be explained by the fact that consumers participate more actively if they perceive relevance, interest or need for a brand on a social media page. Consumers do have a positive impact-level experience when they are using social media and the brand appeals to them and their customers engagement with a brand is the predictor of the brand usage intention. The social brand engagement motivates participants to talk about their experiences with the product and put them into words, making the brand part of themselves. The social engagement of brands gives a chance to people to communicate without boundaries. The degree of engagement and interdependence between consumers and brands is social brand engagement. (Rosen et al., 2013) explicates that the increased usage of the social media by customers has made it easier for companies to engage with customers on social media. Moreover, according to (Felix et al., 2017) the definition of customer engagement states that SBE is driven by consumer's needs, goals and motivations. Also, as it is the era of 21st century and everything is digitalized so people uses online medium to as it has become the need of an hour. Similarly, there are multi various social media platform like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube, LinkedIn and so on that boost consumer brand engagement. In particular, the most common are Facebook and Instagram through which consumers view the brand's page and check out the whole website. According to (Osei-Frimpong & Mclean, 2017), brand associations and perceptions are the driving forces behind brand usage intentions and the positive word-of-mouth.

Firm-Generated Content

Recent technological advances have made information more accessible to consumers and businesses which has changed the way businesses and customers communicate on both sides. In the traditional media advertising, the direct and impersonal transmission of a company's or organization's message to its target audience is referred to as 'company-created content (Keller, K.L., 2016). It is now significant, as the firm generated content builds trust and authenticity for companies and shows the credibility to customers resulting in customer engagement towards the brand. The customers can share content, opinions and experiences about the brand on their social media medium. Brands can increase their reach by actively supporting and promoting user-generated content, developing a sense of community and the belongingness among customers resulting into customer brand loyalty. (Leon et al., 2017).

(Kumar et al. 2016) highlight the three reasoning that company-generated content informs customers about a company's present-day prices, products and campaigns. They explained that company-generated content has a positive impact on the consumer behavior. Also, it encourages greater online presence and interaction with the other brands. Along with that, when a company updates the content on its social media platform, consumers respond in different ways, such as through "likes" and comments, which can trigger different reactions, which in turn leads to a positive brand reputation. Companies create content likely to appeal to the social media platform's target audience based on the mood of the post, the users' reaction to the post and the specific attitude of the social media medium consumers towards the company. This demonstrates that the company is building a personal relationship with its customers and is an example of the comparative exchange expected in a brand's social engagement process. The quality of interaction and the type of media a company offers on social networks are key to sharing social impact through the social presence (Chang & Hsu, 2016; Keller, 2016) To retain brand engagement, companies must involve with their consumers on social networks. need to engage, but rather users have the ability to engage with brands.

Methodology

Furthermore, the specific motivation for this study was to identify variables and their relationships that measure differences in the population. This method was chosen for this study because it uses primary data. The study shows how a brand's online social activity influences customer loyalty. The prime objective of the study was to determine the positive or negative impact of a brand's online social engagement on other relevant factors including customer loyalty. Brand social engagement is now the primary means by which brands interact with their customers. The results showed that brands that do not interact socially with their consumers attract fewer customers than brands that interact online. Since online social interaction with brands is related to customer loyalty, a qualitative phenomenological study was used in this research. The primary sources were used in this study for data collection. The study was based on interviews with people who prefer to interact with brands online and referred to a number of research articles for further analysis. The

respondents were predominantly people who interacted with brands on social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Along with that, the data was gathered from Karachi, Pakistan and both male and female respondents were taken under consideration. Based on respondents' age and frequency of social media usage, purchasing power was estimated. The minimum number of participants for this study and data collection was 20 participants who gave the interview. All age and sex groups were included in the data collection. The majority of people who use social media regularly, shop online and interact with brands with the help of social media were included in the data collection. In terms of data collection, semi-structured interviews were conducted for the study. The data collection instrument was developed by the author and the interview questions were validated by the supervisor. It defines that what happens when customers interact with a brand through an online platform. It has been seen that data from the semi-structured interviews were transcribed and examined with the help of thematic analysis, whereas data collection and analysis were conducted simultaneously. A purposive sampling technique was used for data collection. The researcher's aim was to follow the instructions of the course leaders and to collect as much data as was really necessary for the study. The opinions of the respondents were taken into account in the data collection. Respondents from each age group were used to collect data.

4.1 Thematic Analysis:

4.1.1 Social Brand Engagement leading towards Customer Loyalty

It is true that the social brand engagement has a great influence on their customers. While companies today consider social media to be the most effective strategy for retaining and gaining customer trust. Customers are increasingly using online communication channels to share their knowledge and opinions. The brands that interact with customers on their social media platform can create a two-way interaction channel where consumers queries, the concerns and comments can be addressed in the real time. Improving consumer experience and their contentment can increase customer loyalty. These days customers get engaged with the product or brand through the social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook most commonly due to its accessibility and popularity. (Helme-Guizon, A. & Magnoni, F., 2019). The customers can easily and quickly share their thoughts, ask questions and express their opinions on social media platforms. The brand's commitment to customer satisfaction is reflected in quick and helpful responses, which build trust and a positive perception of the brand. Through actively participating in public discussions and problem solving, brands can demonstrate their commitment to customer needs and resulting in enhancing the customer loyalty. Our respondent#3 said that: "By interacting with customers online, brands can build trust and transparency. Brands can build trust by establishing an open and transparent relationship with their customers. This increases my loyalty towards the brand." Another respondent#4 said that: "Through online social interactions, I develop a sense of community. By feeling part of a community of people with the same values and interests, I

develop a sense of belonging and result in the brand loyalty. One more respondent#5 shared her experience: "*I believe participation in social media provide assistance in increasing brand awareness and credibility. When the brands interact with consumers online, customers can share about their positive experiences regarding the brand, which for me result in attracting new consumers and increase the loyalty of the existing ones.*

Another respondent#2 said that
"*Those brands who customize their communication with consumers through social media. By knowing their customers' priorities and the interests, marketers can better customize their messages and the offers in order to connect with their set and fixed target market. In my opinion, this customization strengthens the emotional relationship with the product brand and aids in increasing the brand loyalty.*"

4.1.2 Positive word of mouth (E-WOM) is positively related to brand usage intent

Positive electronic word of mouth allows potential buyers to utilize the first-hand experiences of others in order to support their shopping purchase decision. People they know or are connected to, such as family, friends and online influencers, are more reliable to trust and to follow recommendations. Shoppers often share their experiences, ideas and suggestions with others as part of their interaction with a brand. Positive recommendations from satisfied customers can influence shoppers' friends, family and social networks. When interactions with a brand promote verbal communication, people rely on the advice of their peers, which has an imperative effect on their purchasing decisions (Tajuddin et al., 2020).

As respondent#6 talked about her experience:
"*Brands can increase positive word of mouth by exceeding the customer's expectations. I become impressed when a brand provides me with personalized messages and an amazing shopping experience which make me feel to buy from the brand again and spread a positive narrative in their circle*".

Another respondent#13 said that:
"*Brand endorsement by the celebrity is another form of electronic word of mouth. A positive image of the celebrity and his association with the fans would result in greater buying decisions according to me. Likewise, I trust and rely on my favourite celebrity figure due to which I don't hassle much before the purchase.*"

One more participant#18 said that:
"*When I visit a website, I believe in customers' feedback in the form of testimonials. Also, they try the products and instruct us how to utilize the product make us believe that how it is going to benefit our lives. This is how it catches my attention and influences to buy the product.*" Along with that, another respondent shared his point of view: "*Referrals and Ewom is the best way to attract customers towards the brand. I find the rewards on referrals very interesting due to which I get engaged with a brand and do refer people in my circle about the products and services that I use. In return I get the*

discount on my purchase and the one I referred which is quite appealing for the people."

4.1.3 Customer Brand Engagement is influenced by Positive word of mouth (E-WOM)

Customers can share all of their experiences with brands ultimately leading towards growth and brand loyalty. The companies that prioritize customer engagement are known to create more value for the consumers, not just concentrating on revenue and profit maximization. It is true that positive word of mouth plays a huge role in consumer buying behvior (Yusuf, A.S., Che Hussin, A.R. & Busalim, A.H., 2018). Also, people get to know about the brands through online social medium platforms and can easily get access about other customers feedback which help them to remain engaged with the brand.

One of the respondent#7 said that:

" Brands increases positive word of mouth by exceeding the customer's expectations resulting in greater customer brand engagement ultimately leading towards their purchase intent. I become impressed when a brand provides me with personalized messages and an amazing shopping experience which make me feel to buy from the brand again and spread a positive narrative in their circle.

While sharing the experience respondent#9 added:

"electronic word of mouth creates a great impression on the consumer mindset and buying behaviour. In order to develop a positive effect, the marketers must send free products to the influencers. They will use it and share their experience with the public which in turn grabs people attention and leaves a positive impact on their mind."

As one respondent#4 said that:

"Word of mouth increases the brand recognition with the help of blogs, feedback page, and customer review section and plays a vital role in getting the customer attracted toward the brand. The new audience start recognizing the brand after going through customer's experience."

One of the respondent#10 said that:

" I prefer to shop after going through the reviews of the customers that has made a purchase in the past. If their feedback and rating regarding the brand is satisfactory only then I make a purchase decision. Hence, e-WOM play a huge role in my purchase making decision and getting me engaged towards the brand."

Another respondent#14 said that:

"Referrals and Ewom is the best way to attract customers towards the brand. I find the rewards on referrals very interesting due to which I get engaged with a brand and do refer people in my circle about the products and services that I use. In return I get the discount on my purchase and the one I referred which is quite appealing for the people."

4.1.4 Firm generated Content bring about consumer buying behavior

The firm-generated content plays an important role in consumers' online interactions with brands on social media. The type of content that a brand displays on its website increases or decreases the customer engagement. The more the attractive content is it will boost the customer engagement. It is very significant, as the firm generated content builds trust and authenticity for companies and shows the credibility to customers resulting in customer engagement towards the brand. The companies must involve with their consumers on social networks in order to engage and retain brand engagement. The target audience, brand image and marketing objectives are important in determining the type of content a brand publishes for marketing purposes (Cheng, M., Liu, J., Qi, J. & Wan, F., 2021).

On the other hand, brands typically use the different kinds of content for the marketing purposes. One of the respondent#1 said that:

"The target audience, brand image and marketing objectives are important in determining the type of content a brand publishes for marketing purposes. On the other hand, brands typically use the different kinds of content for the marketing purposes. I expect that a brand should convey their message properly and post engaging content in order to grab the customers attention".

Another respondent#11 said that:

"There is plethora of things that an organization can do to make their brand recognized and most viewed in the digital world. Out of many other things, the firms can post customer success stories on their pages/website in order to build people trust in the brand. According to me such type of content increases the brand's reliability and authenticity which in turn help in customer purchase intent".

One of the respondents#14 said that:

"In my opinion, firm generated content should include podcasts. Most of the people are not interested in reading long texts and paragraphs so the easiest and recent way is to put it in the form of audio and video. It is easy for the people to listen and watch rather than to read. People should talk about their experience and memories with the brand in the form of podcasts".

Moreover, respondent#10 said that:

"According to me the firms should post product guide on their website so that it becomes easy for the people to understand and become aware about all the features of products. It can be in the form of video or images. The product demo can increase my engagement on the brands website".

4.1.5 Cognitive processing positively affects Brand Usage Intent

How customers perceive the value of a product and their service is among prime factors influencing their purchasing decision. There are other factors as well that a customer consider. Product quality, pricing and their benefits are factors that customers consider when purchasing a product (Hollebeek, L.D., Glynn, M.S. & Brodie, R.J., 2014).

As respondent#4 said that:

"I go for a brand because of their good customer service experience. It helps me to know and process about the product and brand as a whole because the more well aware I

would be about the brand the more I would be satisfied and think about the purchase."

Another respondent#17 said that:

"I prefer online shopping these days as when I think cognitively that it becomes easier for me to go through the feedback in order to know about the authenticity of the brand. Also, online shopping makes the mood better as hedonic value is attached to it. So, those brands who have worked on their content and have a customized separate value for customers aces the game as per my viewpoint."

One of the participants said that:

"There are multiple factors playing huge role in the buying decision however experiential buying is the most important one for me. Most of those customers who have a great shopping experience from a brand or by using a product they will again go for the same purchase. So, customers experience during the shopping also plays an integral role."

Another respondent#18 shared his experience:

"The smooth online purchase procedure from the website is another instrumental factor that plays a huge role to buy the product from the brand again. According to me, the easier and simpler add to cart and check out option on the website provide comfort and assistance to me and other customers and therefore becomes the reason of purchase from the brand."

One more respondent#9 said that:

"Most of the consumers consider the presence of the brand or product in the nearby store which help them in making up their mind regarding the product. I prefer those things that are readily available and located at the easiest location preferrable for me as it is becomes easy for them in case of exchange or return of the product."

4.2 Discussion

The research has shown that other brands have a social presence and attract many customers, but this does not guarantee that these customers will buy their products. As a result of which, new ways and strategies must be found to get customers to buy the products (Bianchi, C. & Andrews, L., 2018). This social brand engagement is positively influenced by a brand's social presence, as customers are more likely to engage with a product if marketers offer incentives for engagement. The study did not find a significant relationship between brand social engagement and intention to use the brand. This is because social media engagement does not necessarily increase customers' intention to buy a brand; they may not buy a brand simply because of social media engagement. However, it has been found out that social media engagement plays an imperative role in retaining customers in a longer run. Likewise, most of the people use Facebook and Instagram to post and to stay updated. Specifically, Facebook has around 2.8 billion highly active audience per month, Facebook offers huge opportunities for the brand engagement as there are sponsored advertisements that consumers view and get to know about brand's existence by which they can visit the page and make a purchase decision. Businesses can work and develop company pages, share content, provide

update to the audience and communicate with their followers alongside they can run special advertising campaigns. Furthermore, Instagram allows the firms to post their photos and videos in order to engage audiences. Stories, IGTV and Instagram Shopping are tools that brands can use to market their products and attract followers. The other most common site being used by the people is Twitter which is known for its compact and constantly updated messages, Twitter allows brands to in the sharing of news and participates in discussions among people. The firms can use the hashtags, respond to mentions and join conversations anywhere to increase engagement. Moreover, LinkedIn is a professional networking social media platform primarily for the brands and B2B professionals: Brands can post industry information, post articles, join groups and interact with influencers. Lastly, YouTube is a video platform, so brands can make and post the video content. Brands can host their own channel, show tutorials and demonstrations of items, leave comments, get "likes" and engage followers through offers.

These days most of the firms and brand engage with influencers those who share brand values and market a particular audience resulting in increasing brand engagement and customer loyalty. It is true that the influencers and sponsors can market the brand with the help of virtual entertainment channels by showcasing their encounters and personal experiences. Establishing relationships with celebrity influencers can help brands gain trust, build relationships with followers and increase customer loyalty. In addition, the relationship of cognitive processing of brand and the purchase intention is not significant, as the thinking process during shopping may alter shoppers' expectations in another way round, reducing the likelihood of purchase. These findings are supported by previous research (Lin, S et al., 2018), which found a positive relationship between firm-generated content and consumer engagement. According to this study, consumer purchase decisions are also influenced by company-generated content as a result of social media engagement. Along with that, a correlation was demonstrated between brand intention, cognitive processing and social engagement with the brand. It has been found out that the customer engagement with the brand is associated with a positive intention to buy a product. It has been found out that quality products with low price, great customer service experience and fulfilling the customers demands by keeping up with the trends are the highly instrumental factors leading towards the purchase intent. Likewise, the time consumers spend viewing a brand on social media increases the likelihood that they will use the brand. Accordingly, the results show that there is no significant relationship between intention to use a brand and social engagement with the brand. Customers can establish an emotional attachment to a brand by attending brand events, sharing and communicating about the user-generated content and talking about their engagement with the brand and the event. Whenever customers feel an emotional bond with a brand, they build loyalty to it, which influences their purchasing decisions. They are sure to choose a brand that is connected to their attributes and evokes happy emotions. Also, the word of mouth (WOM) is the result of increased

consumer engagement with a brand and increased social media awareness. According to (Sedalo et al., 2022) companies are currently working on the new marketing tactics and strategies to allow customers to express positive or negative opinions about brands on the social media platform.

Ultimately, this can make customers decide to buy the brand and increase the company's sales. Therefore, the positive and negative communication and word of mouth has a significant impact on the human psychology.

Focus Coding

1. Customer Testimonials	2. Strong Digital Presence	3. Discount Offers
4. Transparency	5. Customer Satisfaction	6. Social Circle Influence
7. Brand Endorsement	8. Product Customization	9. Experiential Shopping
10. Giveaways	11. Social Status	12. Word of Mouth Marketing
13. Marketing Campaigns	14. Company's Success Stories	15. Brand's Credibility
16. Influence of Referrals	17. Marketing Podcasts	18. Product Attributes
19. Trustworthiness	20. Loyalty Badges	21. Time-Saver
22. Digital Marketing	23. Stock Availability	24. Referral Rewards
25. Brand Image	26. Sponsored Influencers	27. Latest Trends
28. Customer Perceived Value	29. Online Branding	30. Paid Content Promotions

Theme Development

THEME NO.	THEMES	FOCUS CODE
Theme 1	Social Brand Engagement leading towards Customer Loyalty	Code 8 & 15
Theme 2	Positive word of mouth (E-WOM) is positively related to brand usage intent	Code 1 & 6
Theme 3	Customer Brand Engagement is influenced by Positive word of mouth (E-WOM)	Code 16 & 24
Theme 4	Firm generated Content bring about consumer buying behavior	Code 7, 17 & 27
Theme 5	Cognitive processing positively affects Brand Usage Intent	Code 9 & 28

Themes	Code	Quotations
4.1.1) Social brand engagement leading towards customer loyalty		*The respondent#5 shared her experience: "I believe participation in social media provide assistance in increasing brand awareness and credibility. When the brands interact with consumers online,*

	customers can share about their positive experiences regarding the brand, which for me result in attracting new consumers and increase the loyalty of the existing ones. Also, respondent#3 said that: "By interacting with customers online, brands can build trust

		and transparency. Brands can build trust by establishing an open and transparent relationship with their customers. This increases my loyalty towards the brand."
4.1.2) Positive word of mouth (E-WOM) is positively related to brand usage intent		*As respondent#6 talked about her experience: "Brands can increase positive word of mouth by exceeding the customer's expectations. I become impressed when a brand provides me with personalized messages and an amazing shopping experience which make me feel to buy from the brand again and spread a positive narrative in their circle. One more participant#18 said that: "When I visit a website, I believe in customers feedback in the form of testimonials. Also, they try the products and instruct us how to utilize the product make us believe that how it is going to benefit our lives. This is how it catches my attention and influences to buy the product."*
4.1.3) Customer brand engagement is influenced by positive word of mouth (E-WOM)		*The respondent#9 added: "electronic word of mouth creates a great impression on the consumer mindset and buying behaviour. In order to develop a positive effect, the marketers must send free products to the influencers. They will use it and share their experience with the public which in turn grabs people attention and leaves a positive impact on their mind." With that, the respondent#10 said that: "I prefer to shop after going through the reviews of the customers that has made a purchase in the past. If their feedback and rating regarding the brand is satisfactory only then I make a purchase decision. Hence, e-WOM play a huge role in my purchase making decision and getting me engaged towards the brand."*

4.1.4) Firm generated content bring about consumer buying behaviour		*Another respondent#11 said that: "There is plethora of things that an organization can do to make their brand recognized and most viewed in the digital world. Out of many other things, the firms can post customer success stories on their pages/website in order to build people trust in the brand. According to me such type of content increases the brand's reliability and authenticity which in turn help in customer purchase intent". Moreover, respondent#10 said that: "According to me the firms should post product guide on their website so that it becomes easy for the people to understand and become aware about all the features of products. It can be in the form of video or images. The product demo can increase my engagement on the brands website".*
4.1.5) Cognitive processing positively affects brand usage intent		*One of the participants said that: "There are multiple factors playing huge role in the buying decision however experiential buying is the most important one for me. Most of those customers who have a great shopping experience from a brand or by using a product they will again go for the same purchase. So, customers experience during the shopping also plays an integral role." Another respondent#18 shared his experience: "The smooth online purchase procedure from the website is another instrumental factor that plays a huge role to buy the product from the brand again. According to me, the easier and simpler add to cart and check out option on the website provide comfort and assistance to me and other customers and therefore becomes the reason of purchase from the brand."*

Appendix
Appendix A
Interview Questions

Q1) What are the factors giving rise to Customer Brand Engagement?

Q2) How do you think that online presence of the brand is important?

Q3) Does the EWOM plays an integral role in consumer purchase intent?

Q4) What sort of firm generated content you expect from the brands?

Q5) What is the driving force behind the customer loyalty towards the brand?

Q6) How much effect does referral and word of mouth have in your purchase decision?

Q7) What are the things that play an instrumental role which you keep in mind while buying?

Q8) Does online social brand engagement lead towards customer loyalty?

Q9) How can brands retain the customer loyalty?

Q10) What is the main factor that would result in customer purchase decision?

5.1 Conclusion

To conclude, the objective of the study is to identify strategies that can influence consumers' brand purchase intention with the help of online brand social engagement. The aim of the research is to present the relationship between social brand engagement and brand purchase intention, as well as the extent to which social brand engagement is reinforced by company-generated content and social presence. This research has focused on the relationship between social brand engagement and customer loyalty that how customers get engaged with the brand and get attracted towards the digital presence of the brand leading towards the purchase intent and loyalty in the longer run. People share information with each other and engage in discussions on social media most popularly on Facebook and Instagram, which increases brand intention and positively influences buyers (Loureiro etal., 2017). It has been observed that electronic word of mouth has a significant role in brand perception. If a customer has had a positive experience with a brand in the past, they are more likely to make a purchase. Along with that, cognitive processing influence on an individual brain, and because the human brain adapts to emotional and psychological factors, it will increase a person's engagement with a brand (Harrigan etal., 2017). It has been found out that quality products with low price, great customer service experience and fulfilling the customers demands by keeping up with the trends are the highly instrumental factors leading towards the purchase intent. This research focuses the relationship between social brand engagement along with the social presence. Also, the influence of electronic word of mouth and the cognitive processing on company-generated content and SBE on the brand usage intentions (Agnihotri, R., 2020). Customers' interactions with a brand allow them to form opinions about its quality and the relevance. Brands have the opportunity to positively influence customer perceptions with the help of engaging content and customer feedback. It is true that a positive perception always results in customer purchase decision. People love to interact with familiar brands that their friends and family use. They learn more about the brand before buying the brand. In short, the success of a brand is enhanced by increasing customer interaction and satisfaction.

5.3 Future Recommendations:

This study focuses on brands' online social engagement and aims to refine the study and improve the outcomes by including different variables. Also, emotion and activation are two other dimensions of brands' social engagement that will be useful for future research which can provide evidence of the relevance of the results. The study was conducted to investigate the relationship between social engagement and customer loyalty with the brand. This study shows that online brand social engagement tends to play on people's minds and attracts more consumers simply by virtue of increased communication and receiving brand-related feedback, which in turn help marketers to revamp their products along with their services.

5.4 Summary

On the whole, the results of the study show that if a brand has a social presence (online presence), customers have the opportunity to interact with it. The firms have to inform customers about their brands and need to encourage interaction of customers with the brand. Therefore, companies need to understand the extent of customers' social interactions with the brand in order to determine their brand purchase intent. Finally, the outcomes of the research should also be taken into account for further progress and development.

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